

Tuberculosis



So you are being treated for active tuberculosis. There is **good news** for people with TB disease! It can almost always be treated and cured with medicine. But, the medicine must be taken as directed.

General Information

Tuberculosis is caused by bacteria. The bacteria usually attack the lungs, but TB bacteria can attack any part of the body like the kidneys, spine, and brain. If it is not treated properly, TB can be fatal.

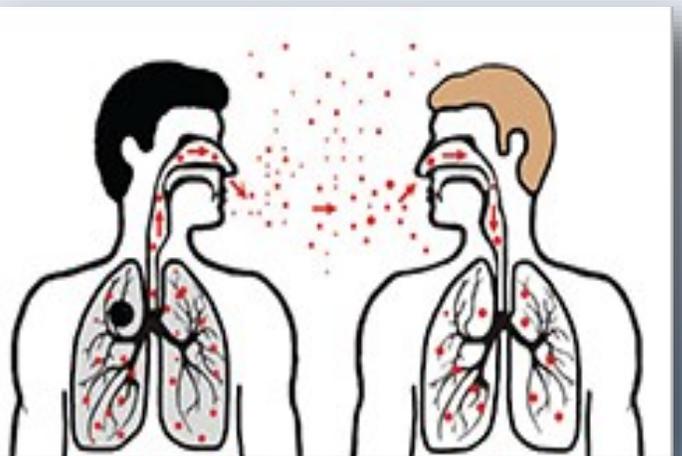
How TB Spreads

The bacteria that causes tuberculosis is spread through the air from one person to another. The TB bacteria is spread when a person with TB disease of the lungs or throat coughs, sneezes, speaks or sings. People nearby may breathe in these bacteria and become infected.

- If the TB is in your lungs or throat, you may be infectious.
- If you are infectious, you need to stay at home until your doctor and the health department say it's ok to return to work or school. While you are infectious, you may also need to wear a mask so you don't spread TB bacteria.
- You can lead a normal life even if you have TB. When you are no longer infectious or feeling sick, you can do the same things you did before you had TB disease.
- In order to be cured, you need to continue taking your medicine even if you don't feel sick. Otherwise you can get sick again.

TB IS **NOT** SPREAD BY

- Shaking someone's hand
- Sharing food or drink
- Touching bed linens or toilet seats
- Sharing toothbrushes
- Kissing





Tuberculosis: Medication

If you have TB disease, you will need to take several different medicines. Taking several medicines will do a better job of killing all of the bacteria and preventing them from becoming resistant.



Common Medicines used to Treat TB

- Isoniazid (INH)
- Rifampin (RIF)
- Pyrazinamide (PZA)
- Ethambutol (EMB)

TB bacteria die very slowly and treatment time varies from person to person. It takes at least 6 months for the medicine to kill all the TB bacteria. Even though you may feel well, the TB bacteria are still alive in your body. You **MUST** take all of your medication to be cured.

If you **DO NOT** continue taking your medication on time, the **TB bacteria will continue to grow**. The bacteria may also become **resistant** to the medicines you are taking. If you develop drug resistant TB, you will need new and different medicines to kill the TB bacteria. New treatment will up to 2 years.

The best way to remember to take your medicine is to choose **Directly Observed Therapy**



Managing your TB

You have been diagnosed with TB, but you are not alone. The Nassau County Department of Health Division of TB Control will help you get the right care. We offer **DOT (Directly Observed Therapy)** and access to services.

Assure the Cure with **DOT**

What is **DOT**?

DOT stands for Directly Observed Therapy. A healthcare professional will watch you take your medicine at an agreed upon place. It can be at your home, work, or any other convenient location.

Benefits of **DOT**

- The healthcare professional will help you stay on track with your medication.
- The healthcare professional will answer your questions and provide assistance with your health care needs.
- DOT reduces the risk of developing complications to TB.

Access to Services

Nurse Case Manager

You will have your own Nurse Case Manager at the Nassau County Department of Health who will coordinate and keep track of your care.

Your Case Manager will be assigned and can be reached at 516-227-9664.

Your Nurse Case Manager can schedule appointments for you at Nassau University Medical Center. TB patients should see a doctor at least once a month for

- Medical check-ups and follow up
- Monitor TB medications

